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OO RUEHCHI RUEHDT RUEHHM RUEHNH  
DE RUEHGO #0246/01 1200150  
ZNR UUUUU ZZH  
O 300150Z APR 09  
FM AMEMBASSY RANGOON  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 8911  
INFO RUCNASE/ASEAN MEMBER COLLECTIVE  
RUEHBJ/AMEMBASSY BEIJING 2262  
RUEHBY/AMEMBASSY CANBERRA 1926  
RUEHKA/AMEMBASSY DHAKA 5187  
RUEHNE/AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI 5404  
RUEHUL/AMEMBASSY SEOUL 8997  
RUEHKO/AMEMBASSY TOKYO 6573  
RUEHCN/AMCONSUL CHENGDU 1777  
RUEHCHI/AMCONSUL CHIANG MAI 2148  
RUEHCI/AMCONSUL KOLKATA 0625  
RUEAUSA/DEPT OF HHS WASHDC  
RUEHRC/DEPT OF AGRICULTURE WASHINGTON DC  
RUEHPPH/CDC ATLANTA GA  
RUEHRC/USDA FAS WASHDC  
RHHMUNA/CDR USPACOM HONOLULU HI  
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC  
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC  
RUEKJCS/JOINT STAFF WASHDC

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 RANGOON 000246

SENSITIVE  
SIPDIS

STATE FOR EAP/MLS, G/AIAG, DS/IP/EAP, CA/OCS/ACS/EAP, OES  
PACOM FOR FPA  
USDA FOR FAS/PECAD, FAS/CNMP, FAS/AAD, APHIS  
BANGKOK FOR USAID:JMACARTHUR, APHIS:RTANAKA, REO:HHOWARD  
DEPT PLEASE PASS TO HHS FOR OGH STEIGER AND HICKEY  
PASS TO CDC ATLANTA FOR CCID AND COGH

E.O. 12958: N/A  
TAGS: [KFLU](#) [AEMR](#) [ASEC](#) [CASC](#) [KFLO](#) [TBIO](#) [KPAO](#) [PREL](#) [PINR](#)  
AMGT, BM  
SUBJECT: MGSF01: STILL NO CONFIRMED CASES OF H1N1 IN BURMA;  
BUT NO LOCAL DIAGNOSTIC CAPACITY TO DETECT

REF: A. RANGOON 241  
[1](#)B. RANGOON 238

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#### Summary -----

[1](#)1. (SBU) The World Health Organization (WHO) and Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO) confirmed that the Ministry of Health (MOH) and Ministry of Livestock and Fisheries' reference laboratories lack the capacity to diagnose A/H1N1. In the meantime, any suspected samples will be sent to reference labs in Bangkok, Kuala Lumpur, or Tokyo for testing. The MOH has a small stockpile of tamiflu, as well as limited equipment for respiratory support, should any infections occur. The UN has 1,500 tamiflu doses; Embassy Rangoon has enough tamiflu to treat all American staff and their families. Despite rumors to the contrary, there are no confirmed cases of A/H1N1 in Burma. End Summary.

#### Still no A/H1N1 Cases; No Diagnostic Capacity -----

[1](#)2. (SBU) During an April 29 briefing for the diplomatic community, WHO Epidemiologist and Pandemic Flue Coordinator Silvia Garelli confirmed that there are still no reported cases of A/H1N1 in Burma, despite rumors of an outbreak in Twante, Rangoon Division. WHO and FAO continue to work with both the Ministry of Health (MOH) and the Ministry of Livestock and Fisheries (MOLF) to improve their surveillance and detection capabilities, building upon existing Avian Influenza (AI) preparedness programs.

¶3. (SBU) Dr. Murray McLean, FAO AI specialist, confirmed that while both the MOLF and MOH have strong National Reference Laboratories, neither has the chemical reagents necessary to diagnostically test and confirm cases of A/H1N1. He explained that the rapid test kits used for AI are of no use with this new virus. Dr. Garelli commented that the WHO is working with the MOH to identify laboratory needs; however, she could not confirm when either the MOH or MOLF would obtain the necessary reagents. In the meantime, both animal and human flu samples would be sent to reference labs in Bangkok, Tokyo, or Kuala Lumpur for testing if necessary, she explained.

¶4. (SBU) Medical experts from the Australian Embassy and SOS Hospital inquired how to best transmit human smear samples to an overseas reference lab. WHO pledged to coordinate with Embassies and SOS, and will set up an information hotline for the general public.

#### Limited Tamiflu Stockpiles

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¶5. (SBU) Diplomats inquired whether the MOH has established any emergency guidelines, should an outbreak occur. Garelli admitted the MOH has yet to do so. She confirmed that the MOH has a small stockpile of tamiflu and limited respiratory support equipment, which should be made available to hospitals for treatment. Chris Kaye, Acting Humanitarian Coordinator, told diplomats that the UN has 1,500 doses of tamiflu, which could be made available if necessary. Embassy Rangoon has almost 1,400 doses of tamiflu, enough to treat American staff and their families. While several other

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Embassies, including the British and Australians, have their own stockpiles, the majority of Embassies in Rangoon do not.

¶6. (SBU) The UN will host a donor meeting on May 4, and will invite officials from the MOH and MOLF to attend. We expect both Ministries will request assistance, including chemical reagents, tamiflu, antibiotics, and funding for surveillance and outreach. Diplomats from Australia, the UK, and Singapore emphasized the need for the international community to provide assistance, including by improving the response capacity of the Burmese Government, which could benefit both the Burmese and the expatriate community.

DINGER